

THE

BOSTON MEDICAL AND SURGICAL JOURNAL.

VOL. XLI.

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 10, 1849.

No. 10.

DESCRIPTION OF A GALVANIC APPARATUS FOR APPLYING
CHLORIDE OF ZINC AS A COUNTER-IRRITANT.

BY THOMAS SMITH, M.D., FORMERLY PHYSICIAN TO THE LEEDS PUBLIC DISPENSARY,
AND TO THE CHELTENHAM GENERAL HOSPITAL AND DISPENSARY.

ELECTRICITY and galvanism having of late years occupied a prominent position in the treatment of several diseases, the following observations on the utility of galvanism will, I trust, be found interesting. For the last two or three years, I have been in the habit of using galvanism as a counter-irritant, finding it less painful than the usual modes, such as moxas, setons, issues, &c. The following is a description of the apparatus I employ, and of my method of using it.

A piece of perforated zinc is fastened or riveted to a piece of platinized silver, or, what will do equally as well, and which I generally use, a sixpence, shilling, or half-crown, according to the size required. The apparatus thus prepared is to be applied with the zinc surface next to the body, the silver being uppermost; over this I place a piece of spongio-piline, previously moistened in salt and water, and retain the whole in close apposition to the skin by means of a few strips of adhesive plaster. At the expiration of every twelve hours, the battery should be removed and washed in salt and water, and then re-applied as before. At the end of twelve days, a deep white eschar is formed, from the action of the chloride of zinc. This may easily be detached, or allowed to slough out of itself, which generally happens about the fifteenth day, leaving a healthy-looking sore. By reversing the galvanic apparatus, that is, applying the silvered surface to the wound, it will be found to heal up quickly; or it may be made to keep up a continuous discharge, by introducing split peas into the opening, or by dressing it night and morning with saline cerate. Where, however, time is an object, and it is desirable quickly to induce counter-irritation, this may easily and speedily be effected by first removing the cuticle either by means of liquor ammoniæ fortissimus, or of acetum cantharidis, and then applying the battery to the denuded surface, and afterwards proceeding as in the former case. In this manner the same effects are produced in from four to six days, as would require twelve days by the other method. If the latter plan be adopted, it is not uncommon for the patient to complain of a gnawing pain in the part towards the

evening of the third day, which, if not relieved, makes him restless and uncomfortable ; a mild opiate, administered at bed-time, has generally had the effect of soothing the irritation, and preventing its future occurrence. In delicate females, where it is desirable not to create more pain than is absolutely necessary for the induction of counter-irritation, the first plan is decidedly preferable. I have observed, on three occasions, where the idiosyncracy of the patient had previously rendered the exhibition of opium or its preparations inadmissible, that during the action of the battery they have produced the most tranquillizing effects. Acting upon this inference, would it not be well in such constitutions as are known to be susceptible to injurious impressions from a dose of any opiate, previously to irritate the cuticular surface by electricity or galvanism ? I subjoin a few cases illustrative of the efficacy of this mode of treating disease, in conjunction with other general treatment.

CASE I.—In the autumn of 1847, I was consulted by a gentleman laboring under the more prominent symptoms of phthisis pulmonalis. He had already been subjected to a pretty active course of general treatment, among which repeated blisters, expectorants, cod-liver oil, iodine and its compounds, had formed a prominent part. After trying a variety of the more useful adjuvants in such cases without deriving much benefit, I recommended an issue. My patient objecting to the use of caustic, of which he had formerly had experience, I substituted a couple of batteries, made with a shilling and a piece of perforated zinc, and applied one under each clavicle. As soon as the eschar was removed, the wound was dressed occasionally with savine ointment for about two months. The batteries were then again applied to another part of the chest, in a line with the clavicles, and the old sores allowed to heal up. This process was continued for the space of fifteen months. He was ordered light nourishing food, to avoid all hot diluents and sloppy dishes, to drink moderately of malt liquor, and to exercise himself freely when the weather was favorable. To relieve the distressing cough, which occasioned racking pains and restless nights, I prescribed inhalation of the vapor of the water-hemlock seeds, made in the proportion of one drachm of the bruised seeds to half a pint of boiling water, with half a drachm of chloric ether, and the same quantity of tincture of squills. As tonics, he took occasionally preparations of iron, quinine, calumba, with bicarbonate of potash, and spirits of turpentine. When I last saw him he had regained his healthy looks. His cough had entirely left him ; morning expectoration of a mucous character alone remained ; the appetite had improved ; and the perspirations had ceased. He had, within the last six months, gained fourteen pounds in weight. This I regard as a very favorable indication, though one on which too much reliance ought not to be placed. A slight dulness still remained on the inner third of the left clavicular region, together with increased expiratory murmur. These symptoms, I am in hopes, will ultimately yield ; at present, the case wears a favorable aspect.

CASE II.—A lady aged 38, the mother of six children, tall, of spare habit, and sallow complexion, applied to me in November last, respect-

ing an affection under which she had been laboring for some months, and which had latterly increased considerably in severity. Her principal symptoms were, pains and giddiness in the head, excessive appetite, almost amounting to bulimia, and when in the horizontal position, throbbing of the carotids and temporal arteries to an extremely uncomfortable degree. Heart's action, 80 in the minute—strong, but not immoderately so ; no abnormal bruit ; radial pulsation regular, easily compressible, synchronous with heart's action, but weak and small, as compared with the pulsation in the carotids. Mouth frequently clammy ; breath of an unpleasant odor ; tongue furrowed in the morning, gradually becoming clean as the day advanced, eyes clear ; breathing short and easily accelerated, 22 when quiet, but rapidly increased by motion to 30 and upwards, without a corresponding increase of the arterial circulation ; frequent sighing ; countenance at one time deadly pale, and at another very much flushed ; sensation of cold water running down the back ; occasional tremors ; coldness of the feet, and blueness of the extremities ; hands very subject to chilblains in cold or frosty weather ; skin mostly cold, harsh to the touch, rarely perspiring ; urine scanty, showing a copious deposit of the yellow lithates, with an occasional iridescent pellicle ; pain in the loins ; has been troubled with leucorrhœa and haemorrhoids ; bowels very costive, rarely acting without medicine ; faeces cylindrical, variable in color and consistence, some parts very dark, others clay-colored ; great disinclination to muscular exertion ; tottering in the gait ; difficult progression ; frequent attacks of hysteria. The treatment previous to my seeing her, had, for the most part, consisted of such medicines as were thought best adapted for dyspepsia, and for the relief of the more prominent hysterical symptoms. My impression being that there was something wrong in the spinal column, I endeavored to satisfy myself where the latent mischief lay. Percussion along the spinal tract, and hot water applied with a sponge, afforded no positive indication. The tenderness complained of on smart percussion was as evident in other parts of the body, if attention were earnestly called to it. Electro-galvanism I had so often found useful in assisting my diagnosis in similar cases, that I determined to make trial of it ; but not having a machine by me at the moment, and the lad being too ill to attend at my house, and expressing a great dislike to the contemplated operation, I was compelled reluctantly to defer it to a future occasion. In the meantime, I contented myself with prescribing mild aperients to regulate the bowels, and turpentine rubefacients to be applied to the back. Perceiving little benefit to result from these remedies, and not feeling justified in adopting a more active line of practice until I had obtained more definite information as to the condition of the spinal marrow, I again urged the propriety of allowing me to examine it by means of electro-galvanism. This time she consented.

With one hand she held one of the brass tubes of the battery, whilst I, to divert her attention, passed the other rapidly and frequently over the chest and sides of the body. The usual starts witnessed on similar occasions were only apparent ; but on suddenly running the rubber,

without previous warning, from the nape of the neck down the spine, the moment I reached about the fourth dorsal vertebræ, she suddenly fell forward, and complained of a dreadful sensation in the pit of the stomach. This experiment was repeated with the like result. It is one which I have always considered as pathognomonic of spinal irritation, when applied to that particular region of the spine. In myelitis, or meningo-myelitis, intense burning heat is generally experienced, and an involuntary shriek not unfrequently ensues. I have never been able to trace any injurious effects farther than the temporary ones above alluded to, from the employment of electro-galvanism in the detection of these diseases. Rough or prolonged manipulation might, and no doubt would, exasperate the latter malady; but I have seen so much benefit from electricity and galvanism in the former affection, that I do not hesitate to resort to it whenever I am in doubt as to the true nature and exact locality of the disorder. With the clue thus afforded to my patient's complaint, I at once resolved to apply two galvanic batteries of the size of a shilling each, above the seat of mischief, immediately over the spine, in the manner advised in the former case. The aperients were continued, and Donovan's syrup of bark in half-drachm doses, with five minimis of dilute hydrocyanic acid, P. L. 1836, was prescribed to be taken twice daily. On the seventh night she complained of a good deal of pain in the back. To take morphiaæ hydrochlo. gr. ss. at bed-time. In the morning had passed a good night. Eschars forming, covered with a white powder. In twelve days they separated, and were then dressed with savine ointment.

From this day my patient became rapidly convalescent, and in a few weeks returned home quite well.

I could easily multiply cases of the good effects of counter-irritation judiciously applied. I do not attach much importance to the galvanic action produced by the apparatus, but merely recommend it as being an excellent substitute where the more formidable remedies, such as potossa fusa, moxæ, or the potential cautery, may be objected to on account of the suffering they entail, and which in some constitutions is an insuperable bar to their use.—*London Journal of Medicine.*

DIET IN CHOLERA.

BY W. R. HANDY, M.D., BALTIMORE.

It is not our intention to say anything of the origin, pathology or treatment of this disease. Volumes have been written upon it, which, instead of dispersing the gloom that enshrouds this most fatal epidemic, only serve, it would seem, by the accumulation of conflicting statements, to hide its true character in still greater darkness, and render its mystery thereby, if possible, more mysterious.

All that we propose, on the present occasion, is to invite attention to a single point, viz., *the exclusive diet*, prescribed by many physicians in different sections of our country, and which has been the subject of municipal discussion and regulation in several of our cities, during the

prevalence, and in anticipation of the cholera. The diet referred to, is the exclusion of all *vegetables*, as commonly understood and used under this head, and *fruits*. And among the articles to be chiefly employed, rice seems to claim the highest commendation.

The ground for this recommendatory diet is based upon the belief that vegetables and fruits are among the most active *exciting causes* of cholera; and that their use, in fact, establishes the *predisposition*, and thus may be fairly charged with giving existence to the disease.

Now, with all due deference, we respectfully ask if such advice is not in conflict with the laws of a sound physiology and hygiene? and further, in conflict with observations and facts fairly interpreted?

It is to these queries our remarks will be principally confined. And first, in reference to the law itself.

M. Magendie, from the many experiments which he instituted, lays it down as "an important hygienic precept," clearly demonstrated, that man requires "a variety of articles of diet"—that in his food he is omnivorous; and if confined to any one article, however nutritious, that he would loathe, sicken, languish; and, in the cases where he could extend his experiments, as on the lower animals, that they would invariably die—and that from starvation.

"Variety in food," says Chomel, in his General Pathology, "is necessary to man." "The exclusive use," he continues, "of any one article of food, in those whose unrestrained habits would have been opposed to such a course, almost always terminates in disease."

In speaking of the nutritive properties of proximate (organic) principles, Dr. Bell says, in his work on regimen and longevity, "Health could not be maintained in the exclusive use of any one, but on the contrary variety is indispensably necessary."

Again. Man's organization seems to demonstrate most conclusively that variety of food is his natural diet. In the language of Dr. Carpenter, in his Physiology, "The construction of his digestive apparatus, as well as his own instinctive properties, point to a mixed diet, as that which is best suited to his wants."

It is well known that the teeth of man combine those both of the carnivorous and herbivorous animals, having the cutting and rending of the former, as well as the grinding of the latter; and that his alimentary tube holds an intermediate position between those of both classes of animals; not having the shortness of the carnivorous, nor the complexity of the herbivorous, but combining the digestive capabilities of both, and consequently requiring the food of each.

"Repeated analysis," says Prof. Jackson, in his paper on tea and coffee, in the July number of the American Journal of the Medical Sciences, "shows that these articles are unfit for nutrition, and has demonstrated that of the aliment that is adapted to healthy nutrition, one eighth part only consists of albumen, or protein compounds. And whatever is devoid of those substances, cannot perform the office of food, or be fitted for nutrition."

Now protein is the representative of the azotized or albuminous portion of the food, and according to organic chemistry, consists of the fol-

lowing elements, to wit : of carbon forty, hydrogen thirty, nitrogen five, and oxygen twelve ; while of the balance of the food, which is pronounced necessary to healthy nutrition, which constitutes by far the largest portion, not less than seven eighths consist of non-azotized, non-albuminous, or those articles of food which are deprived of nitrogen, and include, in great measure, the various vegetables and fruits which are excluded as improper diet during the prevalence of cholera.

From all this it would seem clearly to follow, that *variety of food* is most in accordance with, and necessary to fulfil, the physiological or natural law of man's being.

But it may here be objected that vegetables and fruits do not contain any positive elements of nutrition, as they are destitute of nitrogen, and consequently of protein, which latter is regarded, according to the degree of its presence, as the proper measure of the comparative nutrient powers of the different kinds of food ; it is then said that this protein being entirely absent in the excluded articles of diet, and that they thereby having no nutrient properties, nothing can be lost by their exclusion ; and that so far as the nutrition of the being is concerned, they are of little consequence.

To this we reply, that the position here taken seems more hypothetical than real ; more in conflict with standard authorities and facts, than in accordance with truth ; for it is not denied that a large class of animals subsist and are nourished solely by the grasses and fruits, and possess the highest amount of energy and strength. And further, that their constitutions are charged with the element nitrogen ; and that their tissues, equally with those of the carnivorous, are possessed of the protein compounds ; hence, so far as the fact is concerned, both classes of animals are on an equality, as both have the protein in their composition, the only difference being in the manner of obtaining it. The class that live on flesh, take the nitrogen along with their food ; while those that live on grass and vegetables, receive their nitrogen along with their respiration, which, combining with the elements of their food, form the protein compounds ; so that, admitting protein and the albuminous compounds to constitute the proper elements of nutrition, the herbivorous class of animals derive the same advantage from its presence as the carnivorous.

But admitting that vegetables and fruits possess no nutrient properties for man, even if they do for some of the lower animals, still we think it may be maintained that they are necessary as articles of diet. Every one admits that heat, or a proper amount of *temperature*, is as necessary to life as food ; in fact, constitutes one of the vital stimuli. Now it is ascertained that one of the great sources of animal heat is from vegetables and fruit, as well as all of the non-azotized articles of diet ; and that this heat is produced by the carbon and hydrogen which are eliminated during the digestion and decomposition of the vegetable diet, combining with oxygen in the production of carbonic acid and water.

On this point Prof. Jackson asserts that "fatty, starchy and saccharine matters are intended solely for the purpose of calorification, by their

combustion or combination with oxygen introduced into the blood by the processes of respiration;" though he does not believe that they are in any way designed for nutrition.

So that allowing that vegetables and fruits contain no nutriment, the fact of their furnishing so much of the heat essential to life, must make them an important, and one would think, an indispensable part of diet; so much so, indeed, that that emergency requiring their expulsion, we would suppose, should be one of the last extreme, arising not under the authority of a hygienic law, for that we have seen advocates and demands their use; but under that of a pathological law, when disease is actually present, and medical treatment demanded. In this latter case we acquiesce, and acknowledge the justice and propriety of the exclusion.

In the herbivorous class, where perspiration is very great, the temperature, by this refrigerating process, is constantly being lowered, and hence, their diet from being exclusively vegetable, gives them an abundant source of supply for the waste of this fundamental element of their existence. In the carnivorous animals "the temperature," says Dr. Carpenter, "appears to be sufficiently kept up by the combustion of the carbon and hydrogen set free by the decay of their tissues."

Man, from the variety of his food, enjoys the capabilities of both classes, and eliminates heat doubtless from both sources.

But the advocates of exclusive diet may exclaim, that even admitting all that has been said about the necessity of variety of diet—which under ordinary circumstances they acknowledge is all right and proper—the point at issue, in all that has been advanced, has not been touched; that what they mean to say is, that the cholera influence is abroad over the land, predisposing the system to an attack, and that vegetables and fruits are among the most prominent causes exciting it into action or producing the disease; hence they assert the propriety and necessity of the advice which excludes all such articles of diet while the cholera prevails.

To this we reply, that cholera is well known to have prevailed as extensively and fatally in the depth of winter, when fruits were scarcely at all to be had, as in the summer, when they are so abundant. And where a case of cholera has occurred after eating fruit, in the language of Dr. Dunglison, it is a mere "coincidence," and such coincidences, in a period of alarm, have been sufficient to excite a terror against its use. And the same author continues, "there is, in truth, not the least reason for presuming that ripe fruits had anything more to do with the causation of cholera than any other kind of diet; and how easy it might have been to excite equal prejudices, on no more foundations, against any of the common aliments." The potato is allowed as an article of diet, yet, according to the experiments of Beaumont, whether baked, roasted or boiled, it is not so digestible as the ripe, mellow apple.

Now, according to the pathology of Chomel, there is a marked difference between *predisposing causes* and *predisposition*; for it must be admitted, that in those places where cholera was most violent and fatally destructive, all had not alike the same predisposition to an attack, and

in some there was no predisposition at all, and in such consequently there was no cholera. But had the predisposition been present, then fear, fatigue, anxiety, and a variety of alimentary articles, any or all of them, would have proved equally exciting causes with fruits in producing the disease.

When diarrhoea or irritation of the intestinal tube is present, we acknowledge the propriety of excluding, as a remedial means, the vegetable diet and fruits. But where this tube is in perfect health, and all the rest of the organs are in a like condition, we cannot see the wisdom or utility of the advice, which refuses the demands of nature by denying that kind of diet which her instinctive teachings in the physiological state the experience of every one abundantly proves to be the surest guides to the preservation of health. In fact, we think it may be safely asserted, that there is no more absolute unity and fixed standard of health, than there is an absolute unity and fixed standard of disease; that consequently there cannot be a fixed regimen of diet suited to every person, any more than there can be one fixed remedy for every disease. For health, which is a generic term, implies the normal action of each and all the organs, whether separately or collectively, as we speak of the health of individual organs, and the general health of the whole. And this normal action may present as various shades of modification as in the various individuals possessing it, and yet all be justly said to be in the possession of health; hence, with such modifications in the normal action of the organs of different individuals, it does not seem to be any marvel, that different persons should choose different kinds of food, and yet that each different kind of food should nevertheless be the proper kind to the individual so choosing, as all his organs are in a state of health, and consequently cannot err in their choice, and that the difference in choice must be explained by the difference in the shade of their several normal actions in health.

If these positions be established, an *exclusive diet*, then, to ward off disease, where no predisposition exists, we think may not only be seriously questioned, but further honestly stated to be positively injurious. The extent of this injury may be briefly stated under these heads, viz. :—

1. By depriving the system of its usual *variety* of food, we thereby injure it by robbing it in a proportionate degree of its otherwise healthy nutrition and proper amount of temperature.

2. By proclaiming this exclusive diet as indispensable, an element of fear is thus introduced, which seizes upon the people, creating such an alarm that they feel at a loss as to what they should eat; reasoning with themselves that probably the doctors may be mistaken about the safety of this and that article, as our neighbors here and there have died after eating it, and that therefore, to be on the safe side, we shall abstain from every such thing as much as possible. Such cases are no fiction; they have occurred; such individuals have abstained, and the consequence has been, as might have been expected, even on common-sense reasoning, that their general strength has given way; all the powers of their system have become weakened, and thus a predisposition, or a standing in-

This induces me to now say that you will never find the system of diet recommended in this book to be of service in cholera.

vitation for cholera or any other disease that may be prevalent, has been created. Fear alone, aside from starvation, is sufficient to do this.

The third and last *injury* we have to mention as arising from this exclusive system of diet, is that inflicted upon a very large and important class of our fellow citizens who supply our markets with those excluded articles, and depend in a great measure on their sale as a means of livelihood for themselves and families.

We say, if the positions taken are tenable, it would seem to follow as a necessary consequence, though not at all intended, that such exclusion is armed with the highest cruelty and oppression on the one hand, as well as with unnecessary deprivations on the other, in resisting the use, of what we all would consider, under other circumstances, as most delicious as well as harmless articles of indulgence.—*Medical Examiner.*

RUPTURED INTESTINE.—CAUSE OF PAIN IN PERFORATION OF SEROUS MEMBRANES

BY MAURICE HENRY COLLIS, M.B., L.R.C.S.

A GROOM of about 35 years of age, of spare make and temperate habit, was brought into hospital the second day after receiving a kick in the abdomen from a horse, laboring apparently under symptoms of incipient peritonitis ; that is to say, he had a rapid pulse, not, however, very small or wiry ; headache, nausea, foul tongue, and diminished secretions ; the belly was both tender and painful, distended, clear on percussion, except at the spot where he had received the blow (about an inch above the left internal ring). The constitutional symptoms disappeared under the ordinary antiphlogistic treatment ; but the abdomen remained swollen and tympanitic, except in the one spot, where he felt a constant dull pain. The diagnosis made was rupture of the mucous and muscular coats of the intestine, and effusion of the bowel contents between the layers of the mesentery, whence the gas made its way into the cavity of the peritoneum, while the solid faeces remained there, giving the dull sound, and forming a centre from which inflammation might spread at any moment. The prognosis was favorable, provided the patient could be induced to remain perfectly quiet. Patients with such an affection suppose themselves well long before they are safe from fatal peritonitis. A case exactly similar to this was brought into St. Louis, in 1823, and terminated fatally from some exertion on the part of the patient. M. Jobert, who kindly gave me the particulars, found, on dissection, a small, recently-formed sac of pyogenic membrane round the effused faeces, which were hard and solid ; the peritoneum in the neighborhood was in a state of sub-acute inflammation, and from a rent in it some of the faeces had escaped, giving rise to the general peritonitis which proved fatal. In another patient, who had recovered from a similar accident, and died subsequently from phthisis, the small intestine was found slightly contracted at the seat of the injury, and bound to the side, just above the crest of the ilium, by a white fibrous band. The treatment in all cases should be perfect rest, a mild diet, and to watch the dull spot, and

leech it when painful. In the present case this plan was successful; the air disappearing very soon, and the local dulness and pain being removed in about six weeks. The mode of cure consists in the formation of a simple fibrous membrane round the faeces, which being absorbent, as all primary membranes are, removes all that can be absorbed, and then secretes pus, and floats the rest into the intestine; or else, contracting round it, pushes it in and closes up the opening.

There is one point connected with this case, of considerable interest generally, viz., the immediate great pain and inflammation on the admission of air into a serous cavity. Of the *modus operandi* of air in causing inflammation, I have never heard any explanation; on the contrary, most persons express surprise at so mild an agent proving so irritating to serous and other membranes; it is, therefore, with some diffidence that I suggest the simple explanation, that it is the nature of air, especially when warm, to abstract moisture, until saturated, from all substances with which it is in contact. Moisture is necessary to the vitality of all tissues, both animal and vegetable, and increased evaporation must be met by increased secretion or exhalation; now healthy serous membranes naturally secrete but little fluid, and an extraordinary call for it produces excessive sub-serous vascularity, exhalation of the more fluid parts of the blood, in a word, inflammation; and that with a rapidity so great, that we cannot say that it spreads from the injured spot where perforation has taken place. This effect we can see in the case of an ulcer, from which the protective pus has been wiped, in cuticular and mucous membranes from which the epidermis or epithelium has been removed, and in those mucous membranes which have little or no epithelium, but where its place is supplied either by exhalation, as in the minute bronchi and pulmonary vesicles, or by special secretion, as in the conjunctiva. In all these, when they are not protected from excessive evaporation, dryness and inflammation are the result of the simple law of nature by which air attracts to itself all watery vapor to which it has access. The pain, also, in cases of perforation of the pleura, is similar to that of acute dry pleuritis, and in those cases where the pleura is protected by false membranes, or by purulent secretion, it is never so severe. Perforation or rupture of the uterus and bladder is seldom attended with the violent pain that accompanies lesions of the intestines; most likely from the absence of air in such injuries. There are, in fact, numerous phenomena, both of health and disease, which depend on this simple law, the study of which would yield us much profit; such as the formation of cuticle and epithelium, the secretion of pus, and endless forms and varieties of inflammation.—*Dublin Jour. of Med. Science.*

SMALLPOX AND VACCINATION—GENERAL SUBJECT OF VITAL STATISTICS.

NOTWITHSTANDING the acknowledged efficacy of vaccination as a preventive against smallpox, and in spite of the efforts made by Parliament, the medical profession, and the parochial authorities, to disseminate the

great discovery of Jenner, it is truly astonishing how many objections and prejudices still prevail upon this subject throughout country districts ; more especially amongst the uneducated part of the population. Every practitioner knows the truth of this remark ; and in proof of its correctness, he might confidently appeal to daily experience. Numerous illustrations in support of such an opinion could be easily quoted ; but it will suffice at present to refer to the two recent *Quarterly Reports* of the Registrar-General, to show how little vaccination is even now practised in many parts of England. In various districts, where smallpox has lately proved very fatal, it is not stated whether the victims had been previously vaccinated ; but in several localities, the registrars report, that a large proportion of the deaths by smallpox, during the last six months, occurred in persons *not vaccinated*. After a cursory examination of the official documents just mentioned, it appears, that not less than 240 individuals actually died under the above circumstances. Doubtless, had all the facts been known in regard to many other deaths by this malignant eruptive disease, the aggregate number would have been very considerably greater. However, as that point cannot now be ascertained, it is interesting to notice some of the places in which these mistaken prejudices against cow-pox have most prevailed. Portsea island, in Hampshire, takes the first rank in this respect ; and here the natives seem so inimical to vaccination, that actually eighty-seven persons died in that benighted locality from smallpox, during the first three months of the present year, not one of whom had ever been vaccinated ! whilst in the summer quarter, ending the 30th of last June, fifty-five persons were also carried off from smallpox. But as nothing is said in the Report respecting previous vaccination, we are left in ignorance respecting this point ; although the presumption is, that few, or perhaps none, were in that way protected. Leicester comes next, and furnished thirty-two fatal cases of a similar character. Then Bristol, where twenty-six instances occurred. In Dorchester there were eighteen examples ; whilst the small town of Reading supplied seventeen cases. These facts, as likewise many others, almost exceed belief ; and indicate a degree of ignorance among the population, which can scarcely be believed to exist at the middle of the nineteenth century : but so it is. When it is remembered, that in addition to the above statement, in many of the fatal cases occasioned by smallpox, no notice is given respecting previous vaccination, whether it was employed or neglected, the proportion must, in all likelihood, be assumed to have been much greater. Truly knowledge has yet to be much more diffused, before the common people can be induced to adopt vaccination as the only safe antidote against variola.

Besides the interesting information just alluded to, the *Quarterly Reports* contain also other matters well worthy of record. For instance, in the parish of Walton le Dale, Preston, it is stated, that in sixty-five deaths reported during the summer quarter of the current year, seventeen of the deceased had no medical attendant. A similar statement is likewise made in reference to Thornton parish, in Bradford, where, of ninety-eight deaths which occurred during the same quarter, as many as thirty-nine individuals died having had no medical advice. One can scarcely

believe such deplorable apathy or ignorance to prevail ; but on such an authority as the above, it must be true. Contrasted with such distressing circumstances, it is gratifying to read, that in Lockton parish, Pickering (situated in the North Riding of Yorkshire, and having a population of 500 persons), only one death occurred during six months. After perusing these, as well as other interesting and instructive statements, the Registrar-General's Reports, although universally admitted to be most useful, cannot be too highly estimated, when smallpox, typhus, cholera, scarlatina, or any other malady, is the subject of investigation. To Mr. Farr, the public and the medical profession are deeply indebted, for the instructive manner in which he periodically digests and promulgates the information mainly furnished by the latter. England now stands pre-eminent amongst all civilized nations, in respect of medico-statistical documents ; and should Scotland, Ireland, and the chief British Colonies, follow so excellent an example, the facts collected would soon suggest social changes of the highest importance to all classes of the community.—*London Journal of Medicine.*

GUN-SHOT WOUND.

[Communicated for the Boston Medical and Surgical Journal.]

NUMEROUS instances are given by authors of the escape of the intestines and other viscera from injury, in penetrating wounds of the abdomen. The following case occurring in this city a short time since, appears to me worthy to be enumerated among the remarkable ones of the kind.

On the evening of the 9th of this month I was called to see an Irish lad, 14 years old, by the name of _____ Kelley, who had received a shot during the disturbance among the Irish on that evening. I found the patient lying on his back, with a pale countenance, quick, difficult respiration, and complaining of intense pain in his abdomen and back. On examination, I found, immediately in the centre of the *epigastrium*, a circular wound of the size of an ordinary bullet, and apparently produced by that missile. Posteriorly, about four inches from the spinal column, and directly over the tenth rib, was another wound, corresponding very nearly in size and shape to the first. The rib at this point was also found to be severely injured—probably fractured. The hemorrhage from the wounds was very slight. After an examination, as minute as the nature of the injury would justify, I was convinced that the ball had not taken a circuitous and superficial course, but had penetrated and traversed this portion of the abdominal cavity. An opiate was administered, cold lotions applied to the abdomen, and strict abstinence and quiet enjoined on the patient.

On the following morning, his abdomen was found much swollen, and tender to the touch ; pulse frequent and small. Complained, as on the evening previous, of severe pain in the abdomen and back. He had vomited once during the night, but the discharge was entirely free from blood. Bled him freely from the arm, and continued the other treatment.

On the fourth day after the injury, the inflammatory symptoms had in

a great degree subsided, and a mild cathartic was administered, without effect. The medicine was repeated, and an evacuation procured, in which no trace of blood was perceptible.

On the twelfth day, an abscess formed at the posterior wound, which, being opened, discharged a large quantity of pus, together with a round mass half the size of a robin's egg, composed of bits of coarse woolen and cotton cloth, which the lad identified as being fragments respectively of his coat, vest, and shirt, worn at the time the injury was received. A large callous formation over the injured rib yet remains; also some soreness in that region. In other respects, he is as well as before the injury.

One cannot easily conceive of a musket ball going through this portion of the body, without doing serious internal injury in some part of its career; and it will at once be objected, that the ball did not *penetrate* the abdominal cavity, but rather went *round*. In regard to this point, numerous and minute examinations have been made, by several medical gentlemen of the city, besides myself, and all are satisfied that the ball went through the body in a direct line.

E. K. SANBORN, M.D.

Lowell, Sept. 30, 1849.

PHYSIOLOGICAL INSTRUCTION TO WOMEN.

To the Editor of the Boston Medical and Surgical Journal.

SIR.—I have frequently noticed that the members of the medical profession complain that their onerous labors, and their untiring zeal, in the cause of suffering humanity, are not duly appreciated; that they do not receive that respect due to their ennobling profession; "that there is a widening gulf between them and the people." Will you permit me to suggest one of the existing causes, which seems to me to be of sufficient importance to claim their attention and consideration for a few moments.

I would ask physicians, if, while wives and mothers have been asking for instruction in the physical laws of their being (that they might be the more capable of preserving their own health, and that of their offspring), they have responded to the call? Have they done what they could for the advancement of true scientific knowledge among females? I am not speaking in reference to the little band who are struggling, through so much opposition and so many difficulties, to obtain obstetrical knowledge; but I refer to the Ladies' Physiological Institute, which has been organized in the city of Boston for upwards of a year and a half, and numbers some five or six hundred members, mostly wives and mothers. They are seeking but the *general* rules of physiology, which physicians *can* give without *injury* to themselves, and with *incalculable benefit* to the Society. Perhaps a brief outline of the origin of the Society may not be out of place here, as some may not have been aware of its existence.

In the early spring of 1848, during the excitement which had been produced by itinerant lecturers upon physiology, a somewhat celebrated professor of elocution chanced to visit Boston, and being in possession of a manikin and some small models, the philanthropic wish to aid the ladies, and to dispose of his apparatus to the best advantage, induced him to

make arrangements for giving a course of lectures, and, provided \$800 could be raised, to make the ladies a *present* of his apparatus at the close. But before his plans were sufficiently matured, another philanthropist appeared, who urged a strong claim upon the sympathy of the public from the fact that he was the author of a pamphlet which had been widely circulated in the community, and had conducted somewhat to the present excitement. And so eloquently and temptingly did he portray the influence which he could bring to bear upon the subject, that the professor was induced to avail himself of his assistance, and to advance the price of his apparatus to \$1000, himself to receive \$800, and his assistant to receive the remainder as a remuneration for the influence and assistance which he was to lend. It is but justice to the last named individual, however, to say that he supposed (not having seen the apparatus) that it was one of those completely dissecting manikins which he knew to be worth seven or eight hundred dollars. Every thing being satisfactorily arranged, the lectures commenced, and, as might have been expected, the reality fell far short of the anticipations of its sanguine friends, and less than half the proposed sum was realized.

Nothing discouraged at this, another course was announced and concluded, the lecturer magnanimously *giving* his services; when the ladies, still finding themselves very much in arrears, concluded to organize themselves into a society and accept the articles on trust. The professor, finding his rooms thronged with patients, sought a convenient location, and at once established himself in a lucrative business. In the meantime, having discovered that his assistant was not so popular with many of the ladies as he at first supposed, he was unceremoniously shuffled off, after receiving but about \$80 of the spoils.

In the ensuing summer, the ladies, with the most untiring exertions, made arrangements for a Fair, in which they were very successful, realizing the remainder of the \$1000, which was paid to the professor, being \$120 more than his conscience would permit him to charge at first.

Does not such noble perseverance deserve to be rewarded by the attainment of that knowledge for which they have struggled so hard? And if physicians really wish to be thought sincere in their oft-repeated assertions, that none would rejoice more than themselves in the general diffusion of physiological knowledge, here is an opportunity for them to display their sincerity by giving these ladies *truly scientific* lectures upon physiology and the means of preserving health. And do they not see that such a course would tend to the advancement of their own best interest? For with a correct knowledge upon the subject, society would be better able to discriminate between the ignorant pretender, and the truly scientific practitioner; the profession would be properly appreciated, and their worth established upon the surest basis, the intelligence of the community.

After writing the above, the thought that this subject might not be considered of so much importance to others (for I know I am an enthusiast upon the rights of women*), and the fear that you might think me

* By the rights of women, I do not mean their right to legislate or rule the nation, but their right to fully understand the physical laws which govern their own organization, that they may be the better enabled to perform their duties faithfully as wives and mothers.

encroaching too much upon the pages of your valuable Journal, induced me to lay it aside. But circumstances have since arisen which have brought the subject most forcibly to my mind; my ardent desire for the good of the Society has triumphed over my fears, and I have determined to submit this to your discretion, to make any extracts from it you may think proper; or, what would perhaps be far better, remind physicians of this call upon their disinterestedness and benevolence, in your own more appropriate and efficient way. Leaving your judgment to decide, I remain

Yours, respectfully, M. A. SAWIN.

Malden, Sept. 20, 1849.

JONATHAN SWIFT,

DEAN OF ST. PATRICK'S, DUBLIN, IRELAND,

THE most accomplished scholar, dazzling wit: his works, the purest specimens of our language, charm the child, instruct the sage. Walter Scott, his biographer and editor of his Works, says, 1824, "No British author has had so great popularity. The vivid, original power of his genius has supported him in general opinion to an extent unequalled but by his friend Pope, and far surpassing any other of those geniuses flourishing in Queen Anne's Augustan age. Ireland worshipped him with almost Persian idolatry. Sagacious and intrepid, he saw, dared; above suspicion, was trusted; above envy, beloved; above rivalry, obeyed; practical, prophetic, remedial, warning; he first taught Ireland that she might become a nation; England, that she must cease to be a despot. Guiding a senate or an army, he had been more than Cromwell; Ireland not less than England. His courage saved Ireland; his authority improved, his talents adorned, his fame exalted her. His influence, writings survive: the foundation of whatever prosperity she has are in his disinterested, magnanimous patriotism."—He wrote, at 23, "after eating many pippins at a time, I had desperate colic: for a long time, a cruel illness seized me at fits, and hindered me from meddling in any business."

Æt. 41.—"Colic recurred: my old physician, Sir Patrick Dun, attended me." He suffered fifty-five years from what seemed brain-disease, especially when much in society. From its first attack, he seemed aware of his disease,* fully expecting the very conclusion it arrived to: dread of head-affection haunted him; hence fits of melancholy and despondence. He had many disappointments, vexations, public and private.

Æt. 46.—"Memory impaired, I constantly forget appointments."

Æt. 50.—Dr. Young, author of "Night Thoughts," says, "Walking with Swift and others, a mile from Dublin, he suddenly stayed behind. Gazing intently at the top of a lofty elm whose head was blasted, he said, 'I shall, like that tree, die first at the top.'"

* "1805, Oct. 21st,—Another epileptic. Repetition must at length reduce me to idiocy. Memory fails me."—*J. S. B.'s private journal.* 1812, June 2d, an access deprived him of reason till death, June 9th.

Aet. 60.—"This giddiness is the disorder that will at last get the better of me."

Nov., 1731, *aet. 64*, he wrote six hundred witty, satirical lines, on his "Death," describing his infirmities, &c., ending, referring to his "bequest" for a hospital for Idiots and mad-men,

"He gave the little wealth he had
To build a house for Fools and mad."

In 1735, *aet. 68*, he writes to the Recorder of Dublin, "My resolution to leave nearly my whole fortune for a Hospital for Idiots and Lunatics—the life I have led, in the strength of my days, chiefly in courts, among state-ministers, to my great vexation and disappointment, I now repent, too late."

Aet. 70.—"Deafness and giddiness are more frequent; no spirits left, memory almost gone. I can hardly write ten lines without twenty blunders."

1738, *aet. 71*.—"I have quite lost my memory except when perpetually vexed." He arranged that his property should, after his death, be applied for the hospital.

1740, *aet. 73*.—"I bequeath £12,000, (thirty years' savings) for a Hospital (St. Patrick's or Swift's) in Dublin or its suburbs, for Idiots and lunatics." He used to forget the names of his friends, even those who visited him twice a week. "I hardly understand a word I write."

1742, *aet. 75*, he quite lost his memory and ability to manage; second childishness; guardians were appointed.—*Aet. 76*, he often attempted to speak, but could not recollect words to express his meaning; then shrugged, shook his head, sighed.—*Aet. 78*, died. Much water was found in his brain.

The hospital was opened, 1757; in 1846, it supported eighty-seven sufferers, from Swift's bequest, and fifty-seven at trifling expense.

"SWIFT, wondrous genius, bright intelligence,
Pities the humble Idiot's want of sense.
How does this latest act excel
All you have done or wrote so well:
Thus to relieve and to endow
Creatures that know not whence or how,
Argues a soul both good and wise,
Resembling Him who rules the skies.
Swift, to the thoughtful mind displays
Immortal skill ten thousand ways:
And, to complete his glorious task,
Gives what we had not sense to ask.
Dean Swift to Idiots bequeaths his store:
Be wise, ye rich; consider thus the poor.
Great wits to madness nearly are allied;
This makes the Dean for kindred thus provide."

THE BOSTON MEDICAL AND SURGICAL JOURNAL.

BOSTON, OCTOBER 10, 1849.

Suffolk District Medical Society.—This Society has recently been organized in Boston, and seems to have been considered by many gentle-

men to embrace the essentials of the Boston Medical Association. In fact, at a meeting of the District Society, on Monday, Oct. 1st, it was announced that the venerable Association was defunct, when some, having a larger share of attachment than others for old institutions, thought it a very strange affair—indeed, quite revolutionary—for a new society, that had been in existence but a single week, to declare another one, embracing nearly three hundred members, extinct, without asking leave of anybody. The Boston Association had never been civilly asked to die—and it was, therefore, concluded to reflect a little, and through a committee ascertain what the new Suffolk District Medical Society could, would or might do. There was a desultory discussion in regard to the fee bill—which brought out the views of several gentlemen, who came to the wise conclusion, to which all present appeared to assent, that as this District Society was clearly and truly a part and parcel of the Massachusetts Medical Society, it had no right whatever, by the charter, to legislate about fees, or to fix prices upon medical services. The report on this subject, by the committee, of which Dr. Bigelow, Jr., was chairman, was extremely well drawn up, and satisfactory. It was a careful analysis of the powers and privileges of subordinate societies, whose vitality is drawn from the parent trunk.

Dr. Jeffries, the President of the new Society, is an excellent presiding officer. He is patient, courteous, candid and strictly just. When the Society is fairly organized, and its order of duty and business defined, we have no doubt it will be found a useful one. May it live a thousand years!

Burying in Cities.—No arguments have yet influenced the municipal governments of the principal cities of the world, to put a stop to the vast annual accumulation of dead human bodies in their limits. In view of the mass of putrefactive matter pent up in tombs in the midst of a dense population, the wonder is that pestilences do not originate from that cause far more destructive than cholera ever was, or ever will be should the streets be kept clean and the sewers pervious. The Boston Chronotype and Evening Transcript have fearlessly broached the subject anew in this city—although it has been agitated for years, unsuccessfully, by medical writers. In the Baltimore Patriot the following article recently appeared:

"The objectionable practice of burying the dead in the midst of large and populous cities, has at length begun to attract the attention which it deserves, and strenuous exertions are being made to have the evil remedied. There can be little doubt that the foul *miasmata* arising from city burial grounds are a cause of the general unhealthiness of those cities where the practice is tolerated; and statistical tables on the subject show that such is the case. We perceive by an article in the New York Herald, that in 1848 there were 15,919 deaths in that city, and of this vast number only 4863 were removed from the city for interment, the balance of 11,056 being suffered

‘To lie in cold obstruction and to rot,’

most of them half covered and many not covered at all, within the precincts of New York."

A far greater energy must be manifested than has heretofore characterized the efforts of most city governments, to save our cities from inflictions that will certainly overtake them, if a decided stand is not taken to pre-

vent burials or entombing within their borders. It is not improbable that the general health of the people would be improved by an immediate discontinuance of the practice. It is with pleasure we learn that steps have already been taken in Boston towards securing a spacious cemetery in the neighborhood of the city. A liberal appropriation has been made for the purpose, and it is hoped that nothing will prevent the completion of the plan.

Physiological Lectures for Ladies.—A question has been asked, whether the physicians of this city would object to giving a series of physiological discourses to a society of ladies? A large number of them have been associated for a year or two, listening to stuff that has already nauseated them. They have made the gratifying discovery that there are professional gentlemen in the city, who never make presents of manikins, but who really have intelligence, and more substance than sound. If those ladies really desire the services of those eminently qualified to instruct them, but who would never consent to associate with professors of all the opathies now a-going, it is believed they might be gratified. It is strange the usual good sense and discrimination of the ladies has not enabled them to see, ere this, that knowledge vaunteth not itself, neither is it puffed up.

Trial for Malpractice.—Readers will recollect the report, in our last volume, of a suit at law, in which damages were recovered from Dr. Manning, of Lunenburg, Mass., for alleged mismanagement of a dislocated hip. We understand an application has been made by Dr. Manning's council for a new trial. The plea is based on a declaration, that the verdict was against the evidence. The matter is to come before a full bench of the judges of the Supreme Court of Massachusetts, in the course of a few weeks. In the meanwhile some new testimony is spoken of, that will very materially change the aspect of the case. This has been an expensive and vexatious affair to Dr. Manning. If he could be honorably sustained, and finally have that justice meted out to him which he feels conscious of deserving, it would smooth the downhill of life essentially, and gratify a large number of those who deeply sympathize with him, without having it in their power to render any efficient service.

Oil of Valerian.—Advances are constantly making in the preparation of medicines, as in other matters essential to the comfort of man. Instead of swallowing large draughts of the decoction of valerian, which has been a customary method of administering this much-prized antispasmodic, tonic, &c., a pure oil is now furnished by the Enfield Shakers, a single drop of which is vastly more potent, and far less offensive, than the tincture, or any other common officinal preparation of valerian. Mr. Burnett, Tremont Row, has it in small phials, so that, at a trifling expense, the relative value of it, and other preparations of the same article, may be fairly tested. Should the Shakers succeed with other medicinal plants, as they have with cicuta, belladonna, taraxacum, trifolium, lupulus, and some others, practitioners will feel their indebtedness to them, since filling the stomach with a pint of water, as the bearer of a minim of some medicine indicated, may be wholly avoided by the new manner of constructing doses.

Salix Alba.—Because the several species of willow are as common as the grasses in the field, they command hardly a thought as remedial agents. The fact is, the excellent powers of willow are not sufficiently regarded. The discovery by Buchner, in 1828, of salacine, which is found in no less than fourteen varieties of the willow tribe, excited quite an interest for a while; but it has subsided, and this rival to the sulphate of quinine seems not now to have the reputation it deserves. A gentleman of extensive practical observation in the treatment of ulcerations of the mouth and throat, having an origin in secondary syphilis, or the mercurial disease, has found such extraordinary results from a gargle of the bark of the salix alba, particularly that stripped from the roots, that he hopes to induce practitioners to give it a trial.

Medical Miscellany.—At Chateau Theband, near Mantes, the wife of a farmer, at the last advices, had been totally insensible 18 days, not a particle of nourishment having been taken all the while.—Margaret T. Weed, a sane girl, through the wicked devices of somebody was incarcerated in a lunatic asylum. This is becoming a very common trick to get hold of property, and to make certain revelations to be considered the ravings of a lunatic.—A proposition is before the City Council of Boston, for the establishment of a city hospital.—Five cases of yellow fever have occurred at New Orleans.—There are said to have died in Ireland, by famine, in 1847, 250,000 persons, in consequence of the failure of the potato crop, although Great Britain paid \$50,000,000 to purchase food for that miserable country.—Andrew H. Brand, 14 years of age, is on exhibition at Louisville, Ky. He weighs 500 pounds; is 5 feet 6 inches tall; 6 feet round the waist and 3½ round the thigh.—The Board of Health at Gibraltar has ordered that vessels from France, the whole of the North of Europe, the United States, British America, and Great Britain, shall be placed under quarantine.—Smallpox has made great ravages at St. Vincent.—Not a single case of cholera has occurred among the Jews of London. This is attributed to their conformity to the many sanitary regulations of their own law.—Smallpox is prevailing extensively at Cincinnati, say the papers.—Dr. Miller, of the Louisville School of Medicine, the author of a recent treatise on midwifery, has just returned home from the North.—Dr. Gross, of Louisville, is supposed to be preparing a finished work on American surgery. He is an indefatigable man.

To CORRESPONDENTS.—Dr. Wallace's paper on the Periodicity of Fevers, Dr. Slack's on Sensitive Attraction, and the report of a trial for Malpractice in Vermont, have been received.

MARRIED.—Dr. Hiram L. Chase, of Cambridgeport, Mass., to Miss C. A. N. Jones.—Alfred Lambert, M.D., of Springfield, Mass., to Miss E. Sargent.

DIED.—In Tompkins Co., N. Y., Dr. Lewis Beers, a native of Conn., 82.—At Rome, N. Y., Alfred Bergen, M.D., 34.—At Rye, N. H., John W. Parsons, M.D., 71.—At Dahionega, by being thrown from a carriage, Dr. John Hills, formerly of Chester, N. H., 58.

Report of Deaths in Boston—for the week ending Saturday, October 6th, 82.—Males, 38—females, 44. Of consumption, 10—apoplexy, 1—accidental, 1—cholera, 4—cholera infantum, 4—cholera morbus, 1—dysentery, 15—diarrhoea, 2—disease of the brain, 4—disease of the bowels, 7—disease of the lungs, 1—dropsy 1—typhus fever, 1—typhoid fever, 3—pleurisy fever, 1—scarlet fever, 3—infantile, 4—canker, 1—convulsions, 1—old age, 3—erysipelas, 1—croup, 1—inflammation of the lungs, 1—teething, 3—smallpox, 1—dropsy of the head, 4—marasmus, 1—disease of the kidneys, 1—lung fever, 1.

Under 5 years, 34—between 5 and 20 years, 12—between 20 and 40 years, 21—between 40 and 60 years, 10—over 60 years, 5. Americans, 37; foreigners and children of foreigners, 45.

On the Use of Ethereal Solution of Gun-Cotton in the Cure of Erectile Tumors without Operation. By DANIEL BRAINARD, M.D., Prof. of Surgery in Rush Medical College, Chicago.—This adhesive liquid, which was ushered into the profession with great recommendations as a substitute for needles in cases of hare lip, and for adhesive plaster in wounds, seems to have failed in fulfilling the expectations which were excited of its usefulness, and to have become rather an article of the *toilette*, and a substitute for court plaster, than a useful addition to our surgical armory. Struck, however, in the experiments with it, with the contractile power it possesses, I determined to test its application to the surface of any erectile tumor which might present itself for treatment.

During the last winter a case of nævus, of the size of a very large strawberry, situated on the anterior fontanelle of a young infant, was presented for operation. I immediately covered it with a solution of gun-cotton, and, although it was much elevated above the surface, had the satisfaction of seeing it brought, by the contractile power of the liquid in drying, to a level with the sound skin. It was allowed to remain for several weeks, and then a fresh application made; and at the present time scarcely any trace of the nævus remains, although but two applications have been made.

The next case was that of a young child, with a nævus three-fourths of an inch in length, and half an inch in breadth, situated beneath the right eye. This at birth was scarcely perceptible; but in six months had acquired the size mentioned, and was rapidly increasing. In order to avoid the irritation resulting from its proximity to the eye, the application was made during the sleep of the infant, and was required to be renewed twice a week, on account of its becoming loosened. After two months use, the nævus is scarcely perceptible, and the use of the solution has been for some time discontinued.

It is not improbable, that by preventing the necessity of resorting to operations in such cases, this liquid may find a use more important than any to which it has before been applied.—*North Western Med. Jour.*

Non-Contagiousness of Cholera.—At the conclusion of an account of the cholera in Nashville, Tenn., and vicinity, the editor of the Western Medical Journal remarks as follows:—"If we analyze the testimony afforded by these cases of cholera, we shall find in it something that favors the contagiousness of the disease, but much more that goes to prove it to be of local origin. Most of the subjects resided on public highways, and it is impossible to say that the poison of the pestilence was not brought to them by some traveller from Nashville, where the epidemic was prevalent; but they also, as we have seen, lived in damp, confined, dirty houses, in the neighborhood of ponds, and amid all the conditions favorable to the development of malaria. It cannot be shown that there was any intercourse between the inmates of the families in which the disease successively appeared; and it is certain that it was not communicated to those who nursed the sick, or aided in the burial of the dead. That it ceased so suddenly on the desertion of their homes by the affected families, is an instructive fact. The only other remark we shall make is, that none of the patients who died were seen by a physician until they were in collapse, and that uniformly, when the premonitory symptoms have been regarded, the disease has proved easily manageable."